

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-15

INFO OCT-01 SSO-00 ISO-00 CCO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 /021 R

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DRAFTED BY: S/S-O:LMATTESON

APPROVED BY: S/S-O:LMATZESON

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 225575 TOSEC 130014

FOLLOWING REPEAT DAMASCUS 3692 ACTION SECSTATE INFO
ADDIS ABABA ASMARA BEIRUT CAIRO JIDDA KHARTOUM
SANA TRIPOLI DTD 25 SEP

QTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 3692

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, ET

SUBJECT: EFFORTS TO OBTAIN RELEASE OF KIDNAPPED AMERICANS

REF: STATE 224639

1. MET WITH DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER RAFI' SEPTEMBER 22
TO ASK FOR SARG'S GOOD OFFICES TO OBTAIN UNCONDITIONAL
RELEASE OF FOUR U.S. DETAINEES. RAFI'S FIRST REACTION
WAS HE DID NOT SEE HOW THIS MATTER CONCERNED SYRIA.
REPLIED THAT KIDNAPPINGS CONCERNED SYRIA ONLY IN THAT
WE WERE ASKING SYRIA TO USE ITS GOOD OFFICES ON HUMANI-
TARIAN GROUNDS. WE KNEW SYRIA HAD LONGSTANDING AND GOOD
RELATIONS WITH ELF. ALTHOUGH KIDNAPPERS WERE APPARENTLY
FROM PLF WE ALSO UNDERSTOOD THESE TWO ORGANIZATIONS
WERE APPARENTLY MOVING TOWARDS UNIFICATION. RAFI'
ASKED IF WE HAD BEEN IN TOUCH WITH ANY OTHER GOVERNMENT
CONCERNING THIS MATTER. REPLIED I BELIEVED WE HAD BEEN
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IN CONTACT WITH GOVERNMENT OF SUDAN FOLLOWING KIDNAPPING

OF FIRST TWO AMERICANS. AS HE KNEW, SUDANESE HAVE FOR
PAST SEVERAL MONTHS SOUGHT PLAY CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE BETWEEN
ADDIS ABABA AND INSURGENTS.

2. EMPHASIZED IT IS FIRM USG POLICY NOT TO PAY RANSOM
OR ACCEED TO TERRORISTS' DEMANDS OR OTHERWISE NEGOTIATE
FOR RELEASE OF AMERICAN HOSTAGES.

3. RAFI'I SAID HE WOULD REFER OUR REQUEST TO "HIGHER
AUTHORITY" AND WOULD ADVISE THEIR DECISION.

4. COMMENT: OUR REQUEST WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE REFERRED TO PRESIDENT
ASAD PERSONALLY SINCE ONLY HE WOULD HAVE AUTHORITY TO DIRECT
FOMNINISTRY TO CONTACT ELF IN THIS MATTER.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: ADVISE IF DEPARTMENT WISHES ME BRIEF
SARG ANY MORE FULLY ON OUR EFFORTS WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS TO
SECURE RELEASE OF HOSTAGES.
MURPHY UNQTE INGERSON

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